THE RICHES OF GRACE.

A TREATISE

Shewing the value and Excellency of a gracious Spirit, by comparing it with the Nature and Spirits of wicked and ungodly men, which desire not the wayes of the Lord Jesus.

By that Reverend and faithfull Minister of Gods Word WILLIAM FENNER, B. D. sometimes fellow of *Pembrook* Hall in *Cambridge*, and late of *Rochford* in *Essex*: finished by himselfe.

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TO THE CHRISTIAN *READER*, GRACE, MERCY, AND PEACE.

THere was never any age or time (Christian Reader) since the beginning of the world, how corrupt soever, that was comparable to this our thrice unhappy age, in all kindes of corruption, wickednesse, and sinne, with griefe of Conscience I speake it, with weeping I behold it, and with sorrowfull heart I lament it, and therefore seeing

ing wickednesse doth so abound, the Lord (lest his Children (frozen in the dregs of their sinnes) should perish with the wicked) raiseth up, in his mercy, good men (as we see the Author of this Treatise, a man of Rare parts) to plucke off the Visard of sinne from their faces, and to lay it open to the view of the whole world, to the end that every one may see the vilenesse of his wicked wayes and the filthy dregs of sinne, throwne in their face; may blush at the same, be ashamed, repent, amend, and turne to the Lord Jesus, and so eternally be saved.

In this Treatise is drawne to the life, the sinnes and wickednesse of Ungodly men, which desire not the way of the Lord Jesus; together with the Excellencies, riches, great value of a blessed and gracious spirit.

The Author of this Treatise was a man of a Pretious spirit, as may appeare by this and other workes of his in Print: *A Reverent and worthy Divine gives this Testimony in his Commendations, that he was* a Minister very Conscientious, one that had a great ability given him of God to Preach Unto, and worke Upon the hearts and consciences

ences of men, to awaken the sleepie, to informe the erronious, to settle the doubtfull, to confirme the wounded; also that he was a worthy Divine, both in regard of his unwearisome paines in Preaching, consuming his owne body to save the soules of others, as also of his learning and Exemplary Piety. *They that knew him did love and reverence him, and if any did dis-esteeme him, it was because they did not fully know him. He is now a shining star in the firmament of heaven; also that there were hundreds of people that will blesse God to all Eternity for his paines; he needs not our prayses, but our imitation.*

It is true that this birth is Posthumum opus, *and commeth out after the death of the Author; but I hope it will be the more pleasing, to revive the memory of him, whose life and labours were deservedly pretious in the esteeme of Gods people.*

This Treatise is one of the Sparkes of the zealous (dead, yet living) Author, finished by himselfe, which might have laine covered in the ashes of forgetfulnesse, had it not beene blowne up by one (well minded) which received

ved it from the Authors owne hand: it hath beene viewed by a Reverend Divine, to prevent Errours and to make it compleate for the Presse, *which is here' presented to thy view.*

Therefore Christian Reader, let me obtaine this much at thy hand as to except of his labours as precious, well-wishing towards the truth and the professour thereof.

The subject of this ensuing discourse is published for thy benefit, reade it, the Lord give thee understanding to conserve and practice it in thy life and Conversation, Amen.

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the wrath of God in ſo grievous a manner, lay ſo long upon him; *Job* returnes anſwer againe, If this be true Doctrine you ſpeake, that God ſcourgeth none but wicked men, how is it then that wicked men ſo oft, and ſo much proſper in the world, abounding in all worldly pleaſures and delights?

Now *Job* ſhewes that wicked men may proſper in five things.

1. Firſt, in life and health: as the Raven may live five times longer than cleaner birds, *verſe 7.*

2. Secondly, In their mul-

multitude of Children, *verſe* 8. A foule Sow hath more young than an Ewe hath Lambes.

Thirdly, In Tranquillity and ſafety, *verſe* 9. 3.

Fourthly, In ſucceſſe and increaſe of their ſubſtance, *verſe* 10. as the wicked men have a Proverb, the worſe man the better lucke. 4.

Fifth, In wealth, ſecurity and pleaſure: Hearts eaſe, ſay they, is the beſt flower in the garden, *verſ.* 11. 12. 13. 5.

Then *Job* ſets down two things.

Firſt, the ſinne in the verſe read unto you, *They ſay unto God depart from us, for we deſire not* 1.

the knowledge of thy wayes.

2. The punishment in the 13. *verse, In a moment they goe downe into the grave*, and *verse* [illegible] *The wicked are reserved for the day of destruction*; every wicked man God hath layd up, and purposed him to hell, hee gives him of prosperity to fat him up, that his damnation may bee greater.

The verse read containes in it three things.

1. First, wicked mens contempt of grace, in these words; *We desire not the knowledge of thy wayes.*

2. Secondly, Their contempt

tempt of the meanes of grace in theſe words, *Depart from us*, they could be content that the Lord ſhould depart from them in his Ordinance; if no Preaching, no praying, no Sabbath, no ſigne of God amongſt them, they would not much care, not much lay it to heart, nay they alſo deſire it, they ſay unto God, *Depart from us*.

Thirdly, the prophaneneſſe of their lives: They ſay unto God, *Depart from us*: though few ſay ſo with their mouthes, yet by their lives ſo they live, 3.

so they behave themselves.

From the first of these, *viz.* a wicked mans contempt of grace wee observe this Doctrine.

Doct. *That a wicked man doth not so much as desire saving grace.*

For the clearing of the point, wee will define the true desire of grace, *A true desire of grace, is a super-naturall appetite* to grace not had, for the goodnesse of it. There are foure things in the true desire of grace.

1. First, it is an *appetite of the soule* to grace; when the heart doth even

even goe out of it ſelfe for the attaining of grace: there are words in the 107. *Pſalme*, 3. *v.* which ſets it downe expreſly, by the *longing ſoule*; the word ſignifieth, a running ſoule, a ſoule that not onely goes to grace, and the meanes of grace, but runnes to it with an eager deſire and ſpeede. A hungry appetite which ſignifies an hunger unfained, which is

First, *Unſupportable* without meate, ſo that he that truely deſires grace cannot bee without grace. As one ſayd, Take away heaven, and you take away all from

me, ſo it is with the poore ſoule, take away grace, if it be out of hope of grace, it can never reſt, it can never beare the want of it.

2. Secondly, *inſatiable* without meate, nothing can ſatisfie him but meate, though hee had all the wealth in the world, yet he could not be ſatisfied without meate. So it is in the true deſire of grace, fetch one all the gold of *Ophir*, all the honours & pleaſures of the earth, all contents under heaven cannot ſatisfie him, but grace, hee muſt have grace, no content in any thing elſe, but grace, grace. 3d.

3. 3d. A hunger is *irrepulsable*, it will beare no repulse of coſt, when it will afford to give large ſums for meane food; nor of paines, as appeareth by the woman that went five miles in the famine for food, it will beare no repulſe: for were a man a Lord, it would make him beg rather than withſtand it. So the true deſire of grace is irrepulſable, who ſo truely deſires it and cannot get it, he will not let God alone, nor ſuffer him to reſt but begs & crys for it, oh he could bee content to give all he hath for it, and if any thing in himſelf hinder,

he will willingly caſt it off, he will goe through thicke and thin, he will endure any contempt, any diſgrace for it. If he ſuffer any diſgrace, any reproach for grace, he glorieth and re,oyceth in it.

4. Fourthly, hunger is humble, it is not choyce in its meate, if it cannot have pleaſants and dainties, it will be content with Farmers food, yea any thing, Pigeons dung will bee good food; ſo hee that truely deſires grace, is of an humble heart, he can be content to welcome childrens crummes, and account it preferment to

to ſit with Chriſt his dogges: though with *Pauls* Widdow they waſh the Saints feete, though with *David* they be doore-keepers in Gods houſe, yet ſo they may have grace, they care not though the whole world trample upon them, though they bee accounted the off-ſcowring of all things.

Secondly, It is a *ſupernaturall* appetite, and that to diſtinguiſh from a naturall, which naturall men have, and yet hate grace. Every man naturally hath a care of his owne preſervation, wherefore ſeeing hee can- 2.

cannot bee ſaved, but muſt eternally periſh in hell without grace, he will deſire it as a man may give way to cutting off of his arme or legge, rather than his whole body ſhould periſh; though he hate the cutting off of thoſe members, yet ſeeing an unavoydable neceſſity, that otherwiſe he muſt dye, or the like, he doth willingly deſire it. So the foolish Virgins *Mat.* 25. deſired Oyle in their Lampes not becauſe they loved light, for their deedes were full of darkeneſſe, but they ſaw they ſhould be ſhut out of heaven and

and cast into Hell without it. As a dogge that desires to vomit, not because hee hates the meate, for afterwards he lickes up his vomit againe, but because something troubled his stomach: So many a man vomits out his lust, gives over his drunkennesse, whordome, pride, malice, and many other sinnes, because they trouble his conscience, and hee is evidently convinced that he must goe to hell if he live in them; but when his conscience is quiet againe, and the pinch over, he doth willingly yeeld himselfe to all his for-

former lusts. Some have shewed from that place, 1 *Pet.* 1, *vers.* 12. that the very devills have desired the knowledge of the redemption by Christ; though others be of judgement that it is not the meaning of the Apostle in that place, yet certainely it is a truth, for hell were no hell, if damned men and damned devils, did not desire to escape it; but this is not the desire of grace, it is a super-naturall appetite.

3. Thirdly, it is an appetite or desire *after grace not had*: the love of grace is a good thing whe-

whether had or no; delight is in good when had, desire is in good though not had, a good though wee attaine it not, nor possesse it, yet we love it, because wee judge and see it to bee good, or to have goodnesse in it, and therefore we finde wee delight in it when wee have it, and in the want of it, we desire to have it. A man may desire good that he hath, but then it is imperfectly had, which may be two wayes.

First, in regard of the haver of it, or person having it, by reason of some incapabi- 1.

lity

lity in him of not receiving it, grace is a whole thing, so is faith, repentance, love, zeal, &c. they are whole, and intire graces, which goe together, but because we see how good they are, therefore wee desire them in a high degree; that desire is of grace not had, it is plaine, *Esa.* 55. 1.

2. Secondly, in regard of the thing had which cannot be had but successively, as a Sermon cannot be delivered all in a word, but something must succeede; wherefore if there be any goodnesse in a people, seeing and hearing the

the goodneſſe of one part, they will deſire the other.

Fourthly, for the goodneſſe of it, or that is in it, a wicked man may deſire grace for ſome other reaſon, but never for the goodneſſe of it, a ſwine may deſire to be raking in the dung-hill where there is a pearle, but it is not for the pearle, but for the mucke that is there: So as long as the Goſpell and plenty goe together; the Goſpell and Father, and Mother and Wife, and Lands, and houſes, and life goe together; ſo long they will heare the Goſpell and 4.

and ſeeme to love it, but when the Goſpell and theſe things part, then they and the Goſpell part alſo. But the true deſire of grace is for the goodneſſe that is in it. *Balaam* could deſire even the very heart of a righteous man, but it was when he ſhould be dying: for he ſaw that if he had it, there was hope of heaven and ſalvation, but otherwiſe he muſt downe to hel. But this deſire is nothing. Now that the true deſire of grace is not in a wicked man, is cleare from *Eſay* 53. 2. where the Prophet ſpeaking of Chriſt, who

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is the fountaine of all grace, ſaith thus, *There is no forme nor comelines, and when we ſhall ſee him, there is no beauty in him that we ſhould deſire him*; this is meant of the body of Chriſt, for as the learned have writ, Chriſt had all parts in the perfection of a body, and of his ſoule, for it was replenished with all Divine graces; In him dwelleth the fulneſſe of the Godhead bodily, and therefore there was beauty enough in him to have raviſhed all Angels, yea all the world, and ten thouſand more if there were ſo many.

But

But men in their naturall estate see not this; we that are carnall, wee that are sinfull, we that are in our sinnes, wee that are not truely changed nor renewed in our mindes, we see no beauty in him that we should desire him; unlesse hee will bring gold and silver, Hawkes and Hounds, Cards & Dice, if he would bring these, then we should see some beauty in him, but if he bring nothing but weeping, and mourning, and repentance, the strictnesse and preciseneſſe, mortifying and crucifying their earthly members, there

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is no beauty in theſe things that wee ſhould deſire him: wicked men may have a Would, but not a willing deſire, they wiſh thus & thus, but as the old Proverbe is, Wiſhers and woulders were never good houſhoulders, but there is no true deſire in them of ſaving grace.

Now as no love is love indeede but true love, otherwiſe it is hatred; no fire, fire indeed but the true fire; no holineſſe, holineſſe indeed but true holineſſe, for otherwiſe it is but hypocriſie, ſo no deſire is deſire indeede but true deſire.

First,

Reaſ. 1. First, becauſe grace is above the reach of nature, and therefore an aſſe cannot deſire to be a man, becauſe hee cannot conceive better of a man than of himſelfe; for an Aſſe ſeemes beſt to an Aſſe, a drunkard to a drunkard, a whore to a whore-maſter. Now if ſo be that a naturall man cannot conceive better of grace than of himſelfe, he cannot deſire it: if all the world were fooles except one man, that one man would bee accounted the foole, and all the reſt wiſe men. So hee that is a true naturall foole

foole is highly accounted of by his fellowes: ſo a naturall man accounts of ſpirituall men as mad men, The ſpirituall man, ſaith the Prophet, ſpeaking in the Language of wicked men, are mad. 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. *The naturall man perceiveth not the things of God, for they are fooliſhneſſe unto him*: a naturall man may perceive ſweetenes in the world, in his gaine, in his profits, in his pleaſures, in his delights and vanities, and in his luſts; for theſe things are carnally diſcerned, but not in the things of God, *for they are ſpiritually diſcerned.*

ned, a wicked man may have a great deale of knowledge, that a child of God cannot ſpeake of more truthes, nor underſtand more than he doth, but though a wicked man underſtandeth ſpirituall things yet not ſpiritually, but carnally onely and in a carnall ſenſe: this is the reaſon that a worldling had rather have a 1000. pound than true grace, that the covetous man had rather be in his counting houſe, accounting his intereſt-money and his gaines, than at the Houſe of God to heare a Sermon; becauſe they are carnally diſcer-

diſcerned, but theſe things of God are ſpiritually diſcerned. If we that are the miniſters of God could droppe ſhillings and pounds amongſt men in our preaching to them, they would come to the Church more duely, and heare more eagarly and affectionately; but when wee deliver the things of God and the everlaſting Myſteries of Salvation, which are above their reach and underſtandings; if they come to Church, they can ſit quietly in their Pewes being no whit affected with the Word

as if it were nothing unto them.

Reaſ. 2. Secondly, becauſe *Grace is contrary to Nature*, fire cannot deſire water, nor water fire, becauſe they are contrary, one expelling the other, for either the water will quench the fire, or elſe the fire will licke up the water; ſo nature and grace doe thwart one another. Nature would have a man love himſelf, grace forbids it, and commands to love God. Nature would have a man to bee wrathfull, cholericke, and given to revenge upon every ſmall provocation; but

Grace

Grace forbids all theſe and the like. *The Wiſedome of the fleſh is enmity againſt God, Rom.* 8. 17. Take nature in its beſt wits, take a Naturall man in his beſt underſtanding, beſt apprehenſion, and ſweeteſt affable diſpoſition, take the very flower and height of nature, though never ſo learned, and yet it is at enmity with God and grace, and therefore impoſſible it ſhould deſire grace. Hereupon it is that the Magiſtrate neglects, true Juſtice is cold or lukewarme in the cauſe of God, let grace call for the contrary; Fa-

thers and Maſters will not Catechiſe and inſtruct and bring up their Children and ſervants in the knowledge and feare of the Lord, though grace reprove them never ſo bitterly for the neglect of it. Divers Chriſtians will be earthly, dead, lukewarme, let grace ſtirre them up never ſo earneſtly, yet ſtill grace is not welcome, it impoſeth' things contrary; ſuppoſe a man ſhould come to a fire and uſe all the rhetoricke and arguments to perſwade it not to burne, let him threaten it, Burne not fire, if you doe I will pull

pull you all to peeces, yet it will burne ſtill; for it is contrary to the nature of fire to ſuſpend burning; ſo it is contrary to nature to ſuſpend its luſts.

Becauſe grace is not onely above and contrary to nature, but it is a hell unto nature, grace is a hell to a naturall man. Now a Rogue cannot deſire the ſtockes, a theefe cannot deſire the Gallowes, nor a vagrant the houſe of correction; no more can a naturall man deſire grace: for grace arraignes and commits a man, and ſends him downe to *Reaſ. 3.*

hell gates, into hell it ſelfe, if he repents not. I grant a wicked man may thinke hee deſires grace, when he wiſheth, O that I had Chriſt, O that I were the child of God, and that I had grace! but if one ſhould come to this man, and tell him what it is to be a child of God, to have Chriſt and Grace, that thus and thus hee muſt be qualified, hee muſt take up the croſſe of Chriſt, and follow the preciſe and ſtrict rules of Chriſt, and the directions of grace; this man then would even hate thoſe conditions, and ſo conſequently his

his former wiſhes, *Amos* 5. 18. *Woe unto them that deſire the day of the Lord, to what end is it for you? the day of the Lord is darkeneſſe, and not light.* As if the Prophet had ſayd to all wicked men, You thinke you deſire the day of the Lord, that Chriſt the Saviour might come into the world, but to what end is it? I tell you the day of the Lord is not ſuch a day, Chriſt is not ſuch a Saviour, as you doe imagine: *The day of the Lord is darkeneſſe and not light, a day of ſorrow, of griefe, of Condemnation unto you*: So the Lord complai- Mal. 2. 17.

neth by the Prophet, *You have wearied me; Wherein have we wearied thee, ſay they? You have prophaned the Table of Lord, yee have ſnuffed at it, ſaith the Lord: But we deſire the comming of the Lord*; yea ſaith the Prophet, *The Lord ſhall ſuddenly come, but who can abide the day of the Lord? or who can ſtand when hee appeares? For he is like a Refiners fire, and like Fullers Sope*: Thou deſireſt grace, thou that liveſt in thy ſinne; I tell thee that is hell and vengeance to thee, for it commandeth thee to crucifie thy luſts, and to deſcend unto the gates of death,

Mal. 1. 12. 13.

Mal. 3. 1. 2.

death, in the true humiliation of thy ſoule, or elſe it will damne thee in everlaſting condemnation of hell.

Becauſe nature in a wicked man is in its full ſtrength, now if nature in the Childe of God in whom it is in ſome meaſure mottified, and ſubdued, be ſuch an opposite and enemie to the working of grace, ſtirring up curſed luſts, and the like, to quench the motions and comfortable living of grace; how much more when nature is itsin ful power and force where there is no thing elſe? Put meate into a dead mans

Reaſ.4.

mouth, and there is no absolute resistance. The childe of God is like a sick man troubled with ill humors & diseases, he hath true desire of grace yet weake and low, not rayſed to that height and power which they ſhall be, when they are perfectly recovered. Therefore the Apoſtle exhorts the people of God, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 19. *Quench not the Spirit*, becauſe even in them there are ſome luſts, and corruptions ſpringing out of the heart, which will be ready to put out the fire of grace.

Vſe 1. This is for comfort for all poore broken hearts

hearts in whom God hath ingendred the true deſire of grace, let ſuch know that the firſt ſtep to grace to ſee they have no grace, and the firſt degree of grace is the deſire of grace: it is not with the body as with the ſoule, if you will be healed you ſhall be healed; a man may deſire to be healed corporally, and yet his diſeaſe continue upon him; but it is not ſo with the ſoule, if thou wilt ſay, Chriſt heale me, thou ſhalt be made whole. If a man have but the true deſire of grace, it ſhall be given him, *Pſal.* 10. 17. *Lord thou*

thou haſt heard the deſire of the humble: when the poore ſoule is humbled before God in the ſenſe of the want of grace, and breathes and deſires after it, the Lord will grant ſuch deſires. So *Pſal.* 145. 14. *He will fulfill the deſires of them that feare him, hee alſo will heare their cry and will helpe them.* One ſaid the greateſt part of Chriſtianity is to deſire to be a Chriſtian And another ſayd the totall ſumme of a mans Religion in this life conſiſts in the true deſires of ſaving grace. This was the perfection that Saint *Paul* attained

tained unto *Rom.* 7. 18. *To will is preſent with me, but I finde no meanes how to performe that which is good.* Saint *Paul* wee know was the childe of God, and one dearely beloved of God; yet there was the pitch of his godlineſſe, it conſiſted more in deſire, than in accompliſhment; Canſt thou approve by evident and ſound arguments that thou haſt the true deſires of grace? then know for thy comfort, that the Lords ſpirit of grace hath beene moving and ſtirring in thee, *Philip* 2. 13. *It is God that worketh in you*

both the will and the deed, and that of his good pleaſure, not onely of his bounty, from whence hee hath beſtowed many graces even upon ſuch as hee will damne afterwards for their accurſed abuſe of them, with the neglect of the power thereof. But if God have ſet thy will and the ſtreame of thy affections and deſires to himſelfe and to grace, if but thy will yet it is Gods good pleaſure from which he did at firſt elect thee, and gave his ſonne to redeeme thee. As it is with ſinne ſo it is with grace in this: The deſire

ſire of murther, is murther; the deſire of adultery, is adultery; the deſire to ſteale, is theft: So it is with grace, the deſire of faith is faith; the deſire of repentance is repentance: but thou wilt ſay, What good is it to deſire to beleeve and not to beleeve; to deſire to repent, and not to repent; the deſire to have an humble heart, and a broken heart, and yet not to have the heart humble and broken? I anſwer, he that hath the true deſire of grace, hath the greateſt part of grace. Suppoſe a man ſhould be ſcraping

and

and raking, and grinding the face of the poore, to hoard up a great deale of treasure and riches to himselfe; which I pray you is the greatest part of his covetousnesse, the laying up of the money, or his greedy desires and oppressions? surely I judge his covetous desires and oppressions. For any, even a childe of God, may lay up and gather Riches, when it pleaseth God to cast them upon him; so that it is not the having of Riches, but the coveting of them that proves a man to bee a covetous man. For not onely

onely great Uſurers and oppreſſing Landlords are covetous worldlings, for I tell thee covetouſneſſe may be in a begger, and under thy leather coate; if thy minde be running after the world, thou that art never at quiet, but thy heart, thy head, thy hand and all is taken up after it, whether thou accompliſh thy covetous luſts or no, yet thou art one of thoſe covetous perſons ſpoken of in 1 *Cor.* 6. 10. Suppoſe a man ſhould attaine to a great meaſure of grace, that hee is marvellouſly humble, marvelouſly zealous,

lous, marvellouſly holy and ſtrict in all the wayes of God, I would know which is the greateſt part of his grace, I ſuppoſe his ſtrong and vehement deſire.

2. Secondly, ſet it forth by a ſimilitude, ſuppoſe a man ſhould bee in a great ſtraite, that all his goods were to bee confiſcated unto the King: now an execution is ready to ſeiſe upon them, unleſſe ſpeedily he make them over to ſome friend, who will keepe them for him; it may be his friend is an hundred miles from him, ſo that by

by no meanes hee can come to him, now hee thinkes, Oh that I had ſuch a friend whom if I could but come at, I would caſt my whole eſtate upon him, and repoſe much truſt in him. So the ſoule that apprehendeth the wrath of God, and the curſe of the Law ready to ſeiſe on it for damnation, it would faine goe to Chriſt, but hee cannot tell how, the ſenſe of his vileneſſe keepes him off, oh he would bee glad to leave and caſt away all his luſts, and deareſt ſinnes, and take up the croſſe of Chriſt, and if hee could but reach

reach Christ, oh then he would thinke himselfe safe, he would lay all upon him, his very soule and Salvation. Certainely this man hath true faith in Christ: for a man would trust him well before hee would cast his whole estate upon him. There is an excellent place for this in *Hag.* 2. 6, 7, 8. *I will shake all Nations, and the desires of all Nations shall come*: where are three things,

1. First, its a marveilous instinct of the Spirit of God, whereby hee shakes all the children he hath in the world, hum-

humbling their ſoules and terrifying their conſciences upon the ſight of their ſinnes, and they ſtand in the caſts off, caſt-awayes.

Secondly, their deſire of Chriſt. 2.

Thirdly, *The deſire of all Nations ſhall come,* that is, Chriſt ſhall come, where obſerve that Chriſt is not called the aſſurance, but *the deſire of all Nations*, becauſe that there is no child of God, but doth truely deſire Chriſt, though many bee his who have not the aſſurance of it: never did any man deſire to eate which had not eaten before, 3.

before, ſo [I deſire to beleeve] comes from [I doe beleeve.] Let then none be troubled, and feare and complaine for the want of faith, for true deſire ſprings from faith as the roote of it.

Vſe 2. Hence wee may ſee, that grace which wicked men deſire, is not true grace.

Object. You will ſay men come to Church, they pray, they come to the Sacraments for grace, they profeſſe they would have grace, and will you ſay that they doe not deſire it?

Anſw. I anſwer with *Solomon*;

The

The ſoule of the ſluggard deſireth, and hath nothing, but the ſoule of the diligent ſhall be made fat. As it is with a ſluggiſh man that deſires his ground ſhould be tilled, but yet will take no paines to plough it; who deſires that his buſines ſhould goe forward, that hee might have the harveſt, yet will not be at the coſt and charges needfull for it, he may wiih and deſire a harveſt, but ſhall have nothing: So the ſoule of a ſluggiſh Chriſtian, of a lukewarme profeſſor, deſires faith and repentance, but gets neither; but the ſoule of a diligent

gent Christian shall have enough to justifie him, grace enough eternally to save him. But the soule of a carnall Christian desires faith, but gets but a lazie faith, a faith that will not justifie him, a leane or perhaps a lazie repentance that will not save him, a dead performance and profession together: *Rom.* 11.7. *Israel* saith the Apostle, *hath not obtained that which he sought for, but the Election hath obtained it*, first carnall *Israel* sought for the promises of Christ, but they got it not but the Election hath obtained it.

O but our Saviour ſaith, *Seeke and yee ſhall finde.* *Obiect. 2.*

I anſwere, true, if you ſeeke *well*; this word is of few letters, but of great force, it is the very forme of all Arts: for Rhetoricke is the Art of pleading well, and Logicke of diſputing well, ſo is Divinity the Art of ſeeking well, of living well; it is nothing to deſire grace, unleſſe you ſeeke it well: the truth is a wicked man deſires not true grace, but ſomething that ſeemes to him to bee true grace. Now ſuppoſe a man were ſicke, and five *Anſw. 2.*

pills would cure him, he thinketh foure will doe it, and therefore neglects the fifth and dyes for want of it. So a man having his conſcience convinced from the Word of God, that unleſſe hee have ſuch and ſuch faith, ſuch and ſuch graces of the ſpirit of God, ſuch knowledge, ſuch holineſſe, he ſhall be damned. Hee thinkes if I can bee but thus and thus, if I can doe but thus much, I ſhall bee ſaved, whereupon hee will heare the Word of God, he will pray, he will keepe the Sabbath, give over this and that ſinne, leave his

his drunkenneſſe, his ſwearing, and yet when all comes to all, he goes to hell. Why? becauſe true grace which was commanded, and which he ſhould have had, hee accounted and called Puritaniſme and preciſneſſe, and rejected as a ſuperfluous thing; hee thinkes if he can attaine to ſuch a pitch as to live juſtly and quietly, and to be well governed, and to follow his particular calling, and keepe the Church, and performe ſome good duties, though he bee not zealous for God, nor in the worſhip of God, will not endure

reproach for Christ, and for his strict profession: Such a one shall be damned though he have all the grace he lookes for. A crimson shooe cannot cure the Goute; so fine comelinesse of carriage in a naturall man, cannot heale the infection and poyson of corrupt nature. An Asse is an Asse still, though he be never so well trapped: so a naturall man is a naturall man still, though never so well qualified: Hath he love, hath hee knowledge, meekenesse, gentlenesse, and a kind of humility and liberality? comes hee to the Church,

Church, heares the Word, receives the Sacraments: yet unleſſe he be mortified and converted, changed and renewed by the Spirit of God, it is impoſſible he ſhould bee ſaved; *Tit.* 2. 11. 12. *The grace of God which bringeth Salvation, hath appeared unto all men: and teacheth us, that we ſhould deny ungodlines, &c.* as if the Apoſtle would give us to underſtand that there is a grace that bringeth not Salvation; but that which bringeth Salvation teacheth us to deny all ungodlineſſe and worldly luſts, and to live ſoberly, righteou-

ſly, and godly in this preſent world; if then that grace thou deſireſt and haſt attained to, teach not thee to caſt away all ſinfull corruptions, and doe not make thee live holily, it cannot bring thee to heaven. *This grace which* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *teacheth us to deny ungodly luſts*, as if he had ſayd, I know it hath appeared to all, all the world hath it offered to them, it hath appeared to them, but they will not learne of it to deny ungodlineſſe, & worldly luſts, and therefore in ſtead of Salvation it bringeth damnation to them;

them; but it teacheth us and brings Salvation to us. But now becauſe men are apt to ſay every one boaſting, that they deſire grace: therefore for the third Uſe,

Vſe. 3.

Come, examine thy ſelfe or thy ſoule, and we will lay it bare before the Lord, that if thou haſt grace thou mayſt know of it, if not, thou mayeſt bee convinced of it, and ſo perſwaded in time to ſeeke truely for it.

Now if thou haſt a true deſire of grace, than it purifieth the conſcience from all dead workes. If thy

Conſcience now tell thee, that thou haſt any ſinne and corruption that thou art not willing to lay off; it is an evident demonſtration, that thou haſt no true deſire of grace. A man that hath his hands full of baſe luggage, if a pearle ſhould bee at his feete, unleſſe he empty his hands hee cannot take it up, and therefore if he will not caſt away that baſe ſtuffe, we would ſay hee hath no minde to the Pearle. Now thy hands and thy heart are full of corruptiõ; ſo that though grace lye even at thy feete, yet thou canſt not

not receive it up, unleſſe thou empty thy hands and thy heart.

1. Wherefore if there be any luſt, though never ſo deare, any boſome ſinne, which thou wilt not part with, it is an evident ſigne that thou haſt not a true deſire of grace: *Heb.*3.18. Willingneſſe and deſire to live honeſtly, and a good conſcience are joyned together; noting, that ſo a man cannot have a deſire to live piouſly according to Gods will, but hee muſt have a good conſcience in all things: If then thy conſcience tell thee that thou wilt

1. *Mark.*

ſweare now and then, thou wilt tell a lye upon occaſion, and bee ſcandalous to others now and then, and wilt reſerve ſome paſſage for thy luſts; know that thou canſt not, thou doſt not deſire grace. For true grace animates the ſoule to lay off all hinderances of the grace deſired.

2. *Mark.* 2. It is a vehement deſire, if true; a lukewarme deſire is no true deſire. As a man hath a deſire to a peece of cloth and goes to the Drapers ſhop to buy it, he judgeth it to bee worth twenty or forty ſhillings, now if the Dra-

Draper ſhould hold it at three or foure pound, he ſcornes the motion and ſlings away with deteſtation of it; he deſired it, but his deſire was ſtinted, upon ſuch a condition, at ſuch a price above which hee loatheth it. This is the reaſon why the Miniſters of Chriſt are ſo unwelcome to men, and their Miniſtery too. Becauſe they would bring men beyond the price which they would bid for Chriſt and grace; they would willingly have Chriſt, have faith, have heaven, but they are loath to take ſo much paines, to bee at

at ſo much coſt, as they muſt be at, if they ever have it, ſuppoſe thou give over thy whoring, thy ſwearing, for grace, yet if not thy company keeping, thy lying, thou haſt no true deſire of grace; though thou give over all thy groſſe ſinnes, yet if thou retaineſt thy deadneſſe, thy luke-warmeneſſe, though thou give over all thy ſinnes ſave one, though but in a corner or a nook of thy heart, though I ſay thou come to this price, yet unleſſe thou wilt give all thou haſt, no true deſire of grace. For the man that truly deſires grace, his

his desires are vehement such as will part with all things for it; 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. *Yea what vehement desires*; the word signifies desire upon desire, one desire upon the backe of another, and all for grace. *Gen.* 30. *Give me children or else I dye*, saith *Rachel* unto *Jacob*: So the heart cryeth unto the Lord for grace as for a thing without which it perisheth; *Augustine* saith, that the desire of grace is the thirst of the soule, it is a burning and gnawing desire, that will consume a man with desiring. Here therefore the whole

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whole world is convinced of their unprofitable desires. For what dead prayer? what dead hearing? what dead receiving? as if men would teach God how to deny them, or as if they would bid the Lord keepe his graces. They will come and say prayers, and give an eare, but they have no burning nor thirsting desire.

3. *Mark.* 3 Delight in the means of grace: though delight be an effect of true desire, yet it is a signe of grace, because grace in *potentia*, is in the Ordinance of God; therefore the man that desires

desires grace, hee will delight in the Ordinances of grace; hee that desires learning, delights in reading and studying the meanes of it: so hee that desires mortification, delights in the powerfull preaching, whereby hee may have all the corruptions of his heart layd open; hee that desires grace, delights in all the meanes of it, *Psal.* 37. 4. *Delight thy selfe in the Lord, and hee shall give thee the desire of thine heart*; Doest not thou onely pray, but doest thou delight in prayer? doest not thou onely heare the Word, but

but delighteſt in hearing the Word? doeſt thou not onely come to the Sacraments, but delight in the receiving? Then thy deſire is true deſire; when the heart hath this delight, there is an inward drawing the heart to it: Canſt thou finde a forcible tugging and moving of thy heart and ſoule to all holy duties, that thou canſt not but muſt at them; but if thou art aukward and untoward unto holy duties, to the worſhip of God, thy deſires are counterfeit.

4. *Mark.* The more delayes, the greater deſire; delayes

layes are as Oyle caſt into the fire, which makes the flame the greater. As a ſtone the further it is from its center, the faſter it goes to it: ſo if thou doſt truely deſire grace, the longer thy ſoule is before it can attaine it, the more thou art affected after it. The Comicke hath a pretty Proverb, When a man is athirſt, it is a miſerable thing to goe digge a Well to quench it, for every ſhovelfull will but aggravate his drought: So it is with men that deſire grace: *Prov.* 13.12. *Hope deſired maketh the heart ſicke*; when a mans de-

desires are held off and still deferred, that yet he cannot have it, it doth even make the heart sicke with griefe: a man that wants health is sicke because he cannot get it, he tumbleth, and tosseth, and turneth from this side to that side, cannot be at rest; So the soule that truely desireth grace, is even sicke for it; it cannot have content in this nor in that, it is never where it would be, it is as a stone cast up from its owne center, till it have gotten Christ and his graces; every delay, though never so small, seemes tedious to a man;

man at ſuch a time. But on the contrary, thou haſt beene without grace it may bee theſe 20. 30. 40. 50. or 60. yeares; what are thy deſires? are they more than before? No, but as before, ſo they are ſtill; as thou didſt pray before, ſo thou prayeſt ſtill; as thou heardſt before, ſo thou heareſt ſtill; and as thou was faint in thy deſires, ſo thou art ſtill, and ſuch are thy endeavours; it is an evident argument that thou didſt never truly deſire grace; true deſire the longer the more earneſt. Therfore the Prophet begins

gins his prayer, *Pſal.*13. with a *How long Lord* ſhall I have this proud heart, ſhall I never be humble? *How long Lord* ſhall I have this unbeleeving and impenitent heart, ſhall I never have faith to reſt upon thee, and repent of my ſinnes cõmitted againſt thee? *How long Lord* ſhall I have ſuch a dead heart, ſuch earthly affections in thy worſhip and ſervice, ſhall my heart never bee quickned, and my affections never drawne to thee, and faſtned neerer to thy ſervice? *How long Lord* ſhall my heart bee under theſe corruptions

ſhall

ſhall I never get victory over them? how long ſhall I ſerve the devil, ſhall I never ſerve my God? how long ere I ſhall bee a factor for heaven, as I have beene for earth?

If thy deſires be true, then thou haſt gotten ſome grace: As it is in the veines of a mans body, the more they are opened, the more they are filled with blood: and as the bellowes the more they are opened, the more they are filled with wind: ſo it is with the heart, the more it is opened with enlarged deſires unto God, the more it is filled 5. *Mark.*

led by God with grace; the *Pſalmiſt* hath a ſweet paſſage, *Pſal.* 37. 4. *Thou haſt given him his hearts deſire,* there is no deſire on mans part, but there is a [*hath given*] on Gods part: *Pſal.* 145. 16. there is no living thing in the world that can deſire, but the Lord ſatisfieth the deſire of it. Examine therefore thy ſelfe, haſt thou deſired faith, and yet doeſt thou diſtruſt God? haſt thou deſired repentance, and doeſt thou live in thy ſinne, never the humbler, never the lowlyer, for all thy deſires, but as thou waſt yeſterday, ſo thou art to day, as the laſt weeke,

weeke, ſo this, as the laſt yeare, ſo this? certainely thy deſires are not true.

For then thou ſhouldeſt finde God ſatisfying of them: as thou deſireſt, ſo thou ſpeedeſt; little deſiring, little ſpeeding; great deſire, great ſpeeding; Alamentable thing it is that the deſire of grace, ſo great a thing, ſhould be ſo little eſteemed in the world; men ſay they have good deſires, but they are like wicked God-fathers and God-mothers at the Font: who if the Miniſter asketh them, Doe you forſake the Devill and all

all his workes, the vanity and pompe of this world; ſay, Wee forſake them all: Now let the Devill but tempt them to pride, malice, drunkenneſſe, revenge, and the like, preſently they yeeld to it, they ſay they forſake them all, but they doe but lye; So aske them, Doe you deſire grace? Yes, that is my deſire, ſaith one, and I deſire it ſaith another, but they deſire not to cut off their ſinnes, or if they doe, it is as *Saul* cut off the witches, hee cut them off with one hand and enquired of them with the other, when he

he was in a ſtraight: So men can be content to cut off their ſinnes, till a pinch come to draw them to them againe, they can lay aſide their covetouſneſſe till a baite bee offered them, to revenge againe, to drunkenneſſe againe, and ſo to gaming, whoredome, and the like: that theſe men doe not deſire grace is evident.

6. They that truely deſire grace, deſire the meanes of grace: men that deſire a crop of corne, they will bee at the coſt, charges, and paines, for ploughing, harrowing, and ſowing

of their ground, and all other requisites; but notwithstanding their desires of grace, they are both to be at the cost and paines to heare the Word of God and keepe it: *Paul* and *Barnabas* going to *Paphos*, *Paulus Sergus* hearing of it, presently desireth to heare him Preach; no sooner can a faithfull people come to a town but the godly Christians will be at him, to preach to them: No sooner did the *Eunuch* espye *Philip*, but hee presently calls him into his Chariot to expound the Scriptures to him; But thou mayst heare

heare the Word every Sabbath day, but it may be thou wilt ſit at home or in the Ale-houſe, or if thou heareſt, it is but with a ſlight eare: Chriſt hath commanded thee to pray for labourers, how many prayers haſt thou put up to God for faithfull Miniſters, ſuch as may breake to every one his portion in due ſeaſon: I feare there are many thouſands amongſt us to whom theſe things are as Riddles, men doe not deſire the breath of grace, I know there are many talkers, but few doers, talkers by the ell, but

doers by the inch, men must first be doers and then talkers, some are onely great speakers of Religion and holinesse: and now you all sit in your Pewes, I know not which is the best Christian among you, you all heare and looke upon the Minister, but the triall is anon when the Church doores are shut, and you gone home to your houses, by your meditations, repetitions, prayer, and the like duties to engrave it into your hearts, and that your lives may be guided by it. Many hearers are like ale-houses with faire inscrip-

inſcriptions engraven at the entry or walls of the houſe, as love God, feare God, honour the King, pray continually, be watchfull, and the like; yet there is nothing but drunkenneſſe, and curſing, ſwearing, and all helliſh ungodlineſſe within: So it is with men that make faire motions, faire ſhewes, like *Ezechiels* hearers, they will heare well enough, but they doe not; as talking without doing is nothing, ſo there can be no doing without talking; a man that hath true grace, he deſires to bee ſpeaking of it, we be-

leeve, and therefore we ſpeak; if a man have grace in his inward ſoule, it will caſt forth a ſavour into his lippes, it will ſeaſon his ſpeech, the voluptuous man talkes of his hounds, and Hawkes; the Drunkard of his cuppes, the worldling of his plough, and cart, and cowes; the trades man of his wares, and the women of their household ſtuffe, this or that matter, but ſcarce a word of God, or the worke of grace.

7. Men deſire not the companions of grace, like to like, and as the Proverb is, birds of

of a feather will flye together; Where ſhall we have the drunkard, but at the Ale-bench? the Whore-maſter, but at the drabs houſe? the gameſter, but at the gaming houſe? the worldling, but with worldly men? They cannot indure the ſociety of the Saints, for they cannot rip up an oath, but ſome *James* will rebuke them, ſaying, *My brethren, ſweare not at all*; they cannot tell a lye, but ſome *John* will tell them of hell, *that they ſhall be caſt into the Lake that burneth with fire and brimſtone*; they cannot drinke a pot or two,

and be a little merry, but some *Paul* will tell them that *drunkards shall not inherit the Kingdome of heaven*; they cannot play the wantons, but some one or other that takes Christs part, will checke them, and tell them that *hell openeth her mouth wide to receive them*. I never read in any history, sacred or prophane, that ever any of the governours of *Sodome* did visite *Lot* but when they would have done him mischiefe.

And againe, when they desire not the workes of grace, grace bids men live in love and

and amity and forgive wrongs, now where men conceive malice, and revenge, and receive 6. 10. 20. Sacraments and ſwallow up wrath and hatred, and ſpend 1000. ſhillings in revenge, theſe deſire grace no more than the devill: nay grace will teach a man to deny his luſts, and ſinfull pleaſures, and corrupt deſires: I know many think they deſire grace; O they would have it faine, but they will not have it in Gods ſenſe.

There was a fool ſent to fetch wood from the ſtacke, hee would not

goe up to the top of it, but ſtood pulling at the bottome, and had got but a few ſtickes, which if hee had gone to the top, he might have had a great many more in leſſe time, but whiles he was pulling at the bottome, at laſt the whole ſtacke fell upon him and killed him. Juſt ſo it is with all men, all the world hath a ſtacke of ſinne lying upon their backes, and conſciences, now they muſt take away the whole ſtacke before they can be converted: True it is, men pray, O Lord convert me, O Lord give mee thy grace,

grace, but they caſt not away all their ſinnes, they may bee a pulling at this or that, but retaine others; theylive in their deadnes and lukewarmenes in Gods worſhip, and in carnall performance of Gods duties; at laſt the whole pile of their ſinnes falls upon them and damnes them, body and ſoule in hell for ever.

And laſtly, it is an evident ſigne that men have not true deſire of grace, for when grace is offered, then they will not accept of it nor take it. Can a man deſire an hundred pound, and yet when it lyeth

lyeth at his feete, and offered him, will not take it up: God offers thee grace, hee calls by his miniſters, *How long will ye love fooliſhneſſe? forſake your wayes ye fooliſh, and ye ſhall live, and walke in the way of underſtanding, Prov.* 8. But now men will not, they caſt grace from them; I tell thee hereafter, thou mayſt deſire grace when grace will not be found; *You ſhall ſeeke me, but you ſhall not finde me,* ſaith Chriſt. Now I bid you repent, *but you will not beleeve and receive the Goſpell, but the time ſhall come, that you ſhall ſeeke for me,* and that grace

grace which was offered you, *but you ſhall not finde me*, Ezek. 24. 13. *Becauſe I would have purged you, and thou waſt not purged, thou ſhalt not bee purged from thy filthineſſe any more, till I have cauſed my fury to reſt upon thee*: even ſo the Lord ſaith to every ſoule to whom hee offers the meanes of grace, Becauſe I would have converted thee and plucked thee from thy ſinnes, but thou wouldſt not, I would have purged thee from thy drunkenneſſe, and whoredomes, and from the foule filthineſſe of your corrupt heart, but yee have

have neglected and contemned al thoſe meanes of purging, whereby I would have purged you. Therefore now marke Gods finall ſentence upon thy deſtruction, *thou ſhalt never be purged, thou ſhalt cry and call for mercy, yet thou ſhalt never have it*; marke it now yee that have grace preached unto you, and will not take it, now accept it, God will not let you have it hereafter, if you would never ſo faine, but they that neglect grace now, grace will neglect them hereafter.

Object. But how ſhall we get our hearts truely to de-

ſire

fire grace?

Answ.

I answere, first, learne to know it: grace is such an admirable thing that if men knew it, they could not but desire it. All men desire good, though it be but a seeming good; this is that reason that drunkards desire drunkennesse, and the angry men revenge, because they conceive a good in it: But if the drunkard did but know and consider, that his drunkennes would lead him to hell; if the angry man knew that the end of his lust was damnation, they could have but a small (if any) desire to them, or comfort in

in them, but if you'ld desire grace, then labour to know it; Teach me the way of thy Statutes, and I shall keepe them, saith the Prophet *Psal.* 119.33. *Psal.* 9.10. *They that know thy name will put their trust in thee.* That man that knowes and is acquainted with God, that knowes what it is to bee patient, humble, holy, lowly, meeke, and despised for Christs sake, that man will put his trust in God, and seeketh after such excellent ornaments, let come what will come of it, that which all men know to be good, all men desire, and

and therefore few men desire the true good, because few men know it; knowledge of Salvation in the Scripture is put for salvation: a man cannot have his sinnes pardoned, his heart subdued, and all his corruptions mortified, but he must know what it is. Luke 1. 7.

God never knowes any but they know it themselves, those that bragge of their knowledge, and yet live in their sinne, know not God, they have perhaps an intellectuall and carnall knowledge of him, but no saving knowledge of him, 1 *Pet.* 2.9. Therefore one

sayd

ſayd, if all the learning in the world were put together in one man, yet it is not ſo much as in the moſt ignorant child of God, though never ſo dull and weak in apprehenſion of other things, yet if hee be truely acquainted with Chriſt, he hath more knowledge than all the Doctors in the world have by their humane learning.

Anſw. 2. The taſte of grace is ſweete and dainty, that if we could but once taſte it, our hearts would ever water after it, and we ſhould have little luſt to the contrary evill; *Luke* 5. 39. Thou that

that taſteſt of pride, of covetouſneſſe, of worldly-mindedneſſe, thou taſteſt of very ranke poyſon; but if once thou taſteſt of the pure liquor, and of the good things of faith, repentance, holineſſe, purity, and the like things of God, thou wouldſt never deſire the other againe: The Prophet *David* knew not how to bring men *to truſt in God*, but by wiſhing them *to taſte how good the Lord is*, *Pſal.* 34. 8. Hath there any man had the leaſt reliſh of grace, though now they mocke at it, and reproach it, and their con-

consciences tell them as much.

Before the *Israelites* tasted of the Manna, they cryed out, *What manner of meate is this?* here is stuffe indeede; but when once they had tasted of it, they adventured the breach of the Sabbath to get it: So men cry out at the Preaching of the Word, what Preaching is this? here is thundring indeede, of wrath and revenge, hell and damnation, and the like: what, can wee not goe to heaven without all this pudder and stirre? Alas! men know not the power of the Word, men

men ſuperficially know God and his wayes, like a foole hearing of a Lemmon taſteth the pill, and becauſe the pill is bitter hee caſteth away the Lemmon: So thou heareſt of this and that Commandement, to mortifie thy luſts, to kill thy corruption, or elſe of opening hell for thee, thy lippes ſticke in theſe bitter pills, and therefore thou rejecteſt the ſaving ſweeteneſſe of the Word of God. But I have given over my drunkenneſſe, my ſwearing, and the like, will ſome ſay, yet I feele no ſuch ſweeteneſſe by it, they ſay it is

a glorious thing to be a profeſſor, to doe thus and thus, but I ſee no ſuch matter. Thou foole thou taſteſt but the paring and the rinde only of Religion, and doſt thou therefore conclude that there is no more ſweeteneſſe in the heart of it? know thou whatſoever thou conceiveſt, yet Gods people that have taſted the ſweeteneſſe of it account it otherwiſe; ſo did *David*, *Pſa.* 119. 103. *How ſweete are thy words unto my taſte! yea ſweeter than honey to my mouth.*

Anſw. 2. If you would deſire grace, then purge out the ill humors of ſinne, out

out of thy ſoule; Suppoſe a man hath attained to ſome knowledge of grace, and taſte of it, yet if ſinne be not purged out, it will dead his deſires. *Barzillay* refuſed to ſit at the Kings table, and eate of the Kings meate, becauſe of the evill humors of his body: So, ſo long as the old man is not caſt off, though the ſoule ſtand in never ſo much neede of grace, though it ſeeth and judgeth of it ſelfe damned without it, yet ſinne puts the ſoule out of taſte, it cannot deſire it: Sinne is like greaſe to the horſes teeth, it takes away his

his ſtomach, though there be never ſo much meate in the racke, hee hath no minde to eate: Wherefore when the Apoſtle exhorts men to deſire the *ſincere milke of the word*, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. he firſt exhorts them to lay aſide all malice, guile, hypocriſie, envy, and evill ſpeaking, for except a man firſt lay aſide theſe corruptiõs, he cannot deſire grace, for thereby the devill greaſeth thy teeth, and taketh away the edge of thy ſoule from the deſire of grace. When a man deſires to ſleepe, he deſires to heare no noyſe; ſo when a man doth

doth deſire to ſleepe in ſinne, he deſires not to heare the voyce of grace diſturbing him, and the Devill like a diligent Chamberlaine draweth the curtaines of darkneſſe and ſecurity about him. *David* profeſſeth to God, *Pſal.* 119. 18. that his eyes fayled for his promiſe, *When wilt thou comfort me?* he had no comfort in his crowne or Kingdome, or any other thing, and therefore he prayes, Oh, when wilt thou comfort me? but alas! men ſuffer themſelves to be filled with this and that luſt, with ſome corruptions or o-

ther. Now when a mans purſe is full of ſtones, there is no roome for ſilver; ſo when the heart is full of ſinne, there is no roome for grace; *Joh.* 8. 37. *My Words*, ſaith Chriſt to the Jewes, *have no place in you.* As a great Inne filled with gueſts, all the roome is taken up, ſo as there is no roome for others; and by reaſon of the noyſe they cannot heare what others call for: ſo it is when the ſoule is filled with ſinne continually bawling for tendance, and accompliſhment, there is no roome for the Word of God to enter

enter, all the roomes are taken up, there are gueſts in every corner, all the faculties are filled. Therefore the Apoſtle *James*, *Jam.* 1. 21. exhorts them, *Wherefore lay aſide all malice, and ſuperfluity of naughtineſſe, and receive with meekeneſſe, the ingrafted Word, which is able to ſave your ſoules:* all ſuperfluity of wickedneſſe, ſinne, and evill, though it be never ſo ſmall or little, it is ſuperfluity, and therefore if ever you would take phyſick take it faſting, if you deſire it ſhould doe you moſt good, ſo there is no taking of the Word

of God, or any meanes of Salvation, to have any profit by them upon a full ſtomach; as when the heart is filled with ſinne, with pride, envy, malice, hypocriſie, earthlineſſe, deadneſſe, untowardneſſe to godly duties.

If thou wouldſt deſire grace, conſider the want of it; wert thou never ſo graceleſſe, yet if thou didſt but know the want of it, thou wouldſt deſire it: without grace thou art childe of hell, a brat of the devill, and an heire to the curſe of the great God; better had it beene for thee, that thou hadſt beene

beene borne a dogge, or a toade, a ſerpent, or any thing elſe, than to be borne to live and dye without Grace. Art thou proud, and haſt not grace to bee humbled? know, *God will know thee a farre off*, and then woe, woe, damnation is thy end; Liveſt thou in any ſinne and haſt not grace to mortifie, and in time to kill it? better had it beene for thee that thy cradle had beene thy Coffin, and thy mothers womb thy grave, than that thou ſhouldſt live to ſinne, and dye without repentance. O curſed art thou, there are not

ſo many letters in Gods booke, as thou haſt curſes for thy portion, it would burſt thy heart with griefe, if it were ſenſible of the 100000. part of that woefull griefe.

Pſal. 119. 119,120. *My heart breaketh for the longing for thy judgement*: the Prophet conſidering what a fearefull thing it was to bee without the comfort of Gods word, it breakes his very ſoule. True deſire of grace is ſenſible of the want of it; I ſay not therefore that it is without grace, for there is difference, betweene being in want of a thing, and being with-

without a thing; a man may be in want of full health and ſtrength, and yet not without health and ſtrength: ſo a Chriſtian ſeeing in himſelfe, not to have attained to the full degree of grace, deſiring after it, is ſenſible of the want of it. A dead man yee may carry to *London*, or whither you will, he never deſires to baite in the way, hee feeles no hunger nor thirſt, whereas a living man cannot travaile long, but neceſſity of nature calls for refreſhment; a fearefull ſigne that men are dead in ſinne, and in the ſtate

of eternall death, seeing they can travaile up and downe their whole lives, and yet feele no want of grace.

Answ. 5. Lastly, feare to offend God; the feare of evill is the desire of good, feare to transgresse against Gods Commandements, feare to pray coldly, feare to have a by thought at any of the Ordinances of God, feare to bee proud, feare to carry malice, and thoughts of revenge, feare to do any evill to displease thy heavenly Father.

This feare is a marke of true repentance, 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. Where there

is

is moſt feare, there is moſt deſire: What is the reaſon that women are moſt ſubject to deſire, but becauſe they are moſt fearfull? What is the reaſon that Stags and Harts (as King *James* excellently noteth) are ſo thirſty after revenge, but becauſe they are timerous and feareſull by nature? Who deſire moſt to be exalted, to this and that honour, place, and office, of credit and preferment, but ſuch as feare they ſhall never have honour enough? Who are more covetous than they that feare they ſhall never

have riches enough? Would I urge you to the desire of grace, I thinke I can bring such motives out of the Word of God, as will either leave you in the gall of bitternesse, or else make you to desire grace.

Mot. 1. Grace is like the poore man *Solomon* speakes of in *Eccles.* 9. 15. who when a King had besieged a City, yet he by his wisdome delivered it, but no man remembred this poore man, though they had beene all dead men had not he by his wisdome delivered them, yet no man accounted

or

or esteemed of him. So it is with grace, were it not for grace, we should all be damned; and albeit that grace doth bring Salvation among us, yet where is the man that truely accounts of it even so as to desire it?

Mot. 2. Consider that there is no good, indeede good to thee, but onely in grace: What is it that men desire? is it not good? *Psal.* 4. *Many say, who will shew us any good?* some good or other all seeme to ayme at: but it is a wonder, what wide aymes men take, some think it is in pleasure, and therefore ayme

ayme onely how they may ſpend the time merrily, in eating and drinking, in hawking and hunting, in carding and dicing, and the like; ſome thinke it in honour, and ſome in riches, ſome in learning; ſome in one thing, and ſome in another; but alas! thou mayſt eate and drinke, and yet be damned when thou haſt done; thou mayſt deſire much gold and ſilver, and yet periſh in hell, after thou haſt got it; thou mayſt deſire honour and promotion, and yet bee damned when thou haſt attained it; theſe are true,

but

but vaine goods, outward and temporary, good onely in reference to a further good, ſo that if a man ſhould reſt on them, he ſhould loſe all his good. Our Saviour Chriſt puts a baſe Pronoune upon them, calling them *theſe things*, as if they were not worthy the naming, *Mat. 6. 33. Seeke firſt the Kingdome of God, and the righteouſneſſe thereof, and all theſe things ſhall be added unto you:* Where our Saviour forbids his Diſciples the ſeeking of earthly things. In the firſt place talke not of theſe things, neither let your thoughts bee trou-

troubled about them, for they are not what they ſeeme, or as many judge them to be, but if you would have the true good, *firſt ſecke the Kingdome of heaven.* So in *Iames* 5. 1, 2, 3. *Goe too now ye rich men, weepe and howle, for the miſeries that ſhall come upon you; your riches are corrupt, & your garments moath-eaten, your gold and your ſilver is cankered, and the ruſt of them ſhall be a witneſſe againſt you.* Weepe and howle yee great men, Knights, Lords and rich men; if you have no other treaſure, your portion ſhall be damnation and deſtru-

deſtruction in the day of Gods wrath. It is grace alone that is true good, inward ſubſtantiall good, and the laſt good of the ſoule; all other goods they are but finite, but grace ineſtates a man into the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, an infinite full and perfect good: riches, honour, and wiſedome, theſe things are good, but thou muſt give account for them, and if thy account bee not good, thou ſhalt bee damned for the unprofitable uſe of them: thoſe things are not like fat Parſonages, which it may be bring 100. or 200.

pound

pound into the Parſons purſe yearely, and yet may be, they are but 10. or 20. pound in the Kings bookes: it is not ſo with grace, but every pound is a pound, every ſhilling is a ſhilling, yea every farthing is a farthing in Gods booke: ſo that if God hath given thee wiſedome, knowledge, riches, houſes, honours, or any other talent, know that God hath ſet it downe to a farthing, and thy account ſhall bee as ſtrictly demaunded of thee, if thou haſt not grace. Grace would diſcharge a man of all theſe; when all other goods

goods are but as burthens to men to ſinke them to hell.

I hope I deſire grace, may ſome ſay, I pray, I reade, I heare, I meditate, and conferre of good things. *Object.*

When a man is at a banquet, doth hee deſire the diſhes, or the meate in the diſhes? indeede hee may pull at the diſhes, but reacheth thereby to the meate. Prayer, and Preaching, Sacraments, &c. they are but as it were the diſhes; God diſheth up his graces in his Ordinances: now ſhould gueſts when they are at a banquet, ſit cutting the *Anſw.*

the diſhes, they might cut them, and yet riſe a hungry, and ſtarve for all the nouriſhment they would give. So men cut the meate, and when that is eaten they caſt away the diſhes; Prayer, Preaching, Sacraments, they muſt ceaſe, if therefore thou haſt not gotten meate out of thoſe diſhes, if thou haſt not received the grace offered unto thee by them, thou art never the better: thou haſt heard the word, but haſt thou received the ſpirit? thou haſt prayed, but haſt thou gotten grace? thou haſt received the Sacraments,

ments, but haſt thou received Chriſt, and his graces alſo? otherwiſe thou haſt nothing. O what a ſtrange thing is it, that men ſhould feede upon diſhes, and not ſeeke after the meate in them, and ſo ſtarve their ſoules! Did the Prodigall, *Luk.* 15. feede upon his fathers diſhes? No, but on his fat calfe; What though I have a golden key, if it will not open the doore? What good is it for a man to have brave gally pots about him, if there be no phyſicke in them to heale his ſickneſſe? A boate, a boate, cryes the paſſenger, when

when he would goe over the water; what, is it the boate he desireth? No, but that hee may passe over the water. We cry out a Sermon, a Sermon, a prayer, a Sacrament, but to what end? wee should desire them as a meanes wherby God conveyeth grace, using them as boates carrying us unto holinesse, to faith, love, meekenesse, humility, &c. otherwise thou wilt bee never the better: for if a man have a hundred boates, yet if they cannot carry him over the water, what is he the nearer for them? if a man have heard an hun-

hundred Sermons, and have as many prayers, and Sacraments, yet if thereby hee have not grace, nor be carried to holineſſe and Sanctification at the day of Judgement, he ſhall be at the fartheſt part of the River, of the Haven of bleſſedneſſe.

2. No good can ſatisfie but onely grace: *Eccleſ.* 1. 8. *All things are full of labour, the eye is not ſatisfied with ſeeing, nor the eare filled with hearing:* ſuppoſe the eye ſhould ſee all the brave and beautifull things in the world, yet the eye is not ſatisfied with ſeeing of them: ſuppoſe a man

man ſhould heare all the melodious muſique, yet would not the eare be ſatisfied. The woman that came to draw water at *Jacobs* Well, *John* 4. 13. our Saviour tells her, *Whoſoever drinketh of this water, ſhall thirſt againe*, theſe things may allay for a time, but not quench a mans thirſt. For give a covetous man never ſo much wealth and riches, yet his thirſt is not quenched, but there is roome for him to covet againe. Give *Alexander* one world and he will aske for another. Thou art ſick and deſireſt health, thou haſt health

health, yet thou desirest something else: thou art in Prison, thou desirest liberty; when thou hast it, doest thou leave off desiring? No, but thou wouldst have some other thing. Suppose a man were worth ten pound, he desireth to be worth twenty; and when he hath that, hee desireth an hundred, and so a thousand pound. All the goods in the world is like Ale-house Beere, which the travailor drinketh of, but it doth not quench his thirst; a man can never satisfie his desire, with any worldly good. If thou wouldst

wouldſt have that which will ſatisfie thee, then deſire grace, for grace is the proper object of the ſoule. Suppoſe thou hadſt all the brave ſights in the world, yet thou couldſt not ſee them with thine eyes; ſuppoſe thou hadſt all the ſweete Muſique in the world, yet thou couldſt not heare it; for the ſights are the objects of the eyes, and Muſique of the eares. So all the good things of the world are but for the body, not for the ſoule; riches, honours, pleaſures, and the like, are the objects of the body, and not of the ſoule

ſoule, and therefore the ſoule can never be ſatisfied with them. A father in his meditations ſpeakes thus, Lord thou haſt made my ſoule for thy ſelfe, and it can never be at reſt, till it can find reſt in thee. The ſoule is like *Noahs* Dove which could finde no reſt (the waters overflowing the earth) till ſhe returned to *Noah* in the Arke againe: ſo unleſſe thy heart hath found God, and bee drawne up to him the center of it; thou mayſt wander up and downe the whole world, and yet never have content. Couldeſt thou get

wealth, honour, wiſedome, learning, health, and the like, yet without grace the ſoule is empty, and hath not ſatisfaction. They are all tranſitory, and therefore cannot give content. Suppoſe a man could have the world, and yet loſe it againe, it would more vexe him and diſquiet him than if he had never had it. Hence it is that a poore begger, that hath alwayes endured want, can beare it better than a broken Gentleman that hath lived in wealth and pleaſures in former time, want and neceſſity is a hundred

dred times more grievous to him: *Wilt thou* (ſaith *Solomon*, *Prov.* 23. 5.) *caſt thine eye upon that which is nothing? for riches taketh her to her wings, as an Eagle that flyeth to the Heavens*: he doth not ſay that riches flyeth like a hawke which by a whiſtle or ſome other meanes will come to the Faulkoner againe; but is like an Eagle, which no Art under heaven can bring backe againe; all thy riches, all thy honours, haſt thou never ſo much of them, they cannot continue long with thee; for either they will leave thee, or thou

must leave them at the houre of death, then out goes the ſoule, and God knowes whither; it may be the more honours thou haſt, and riches, pleaſures, preferments, &c. the worſe thy caſe is, and the greater thy condemnation.

Thirdly, ſuppoſe they were permanent, yet they are unnaturall to the ſoule; Can a horſe feede upon fleſh, or a Lyon upon ſtraw? ſo my beloved, can a mans ſoule feede upon ſhillings and pounds? can a mans ſoule feede upon luſts, and pleaſures and vanities? No, the ſoule

ſoule is of a ſpirituall ſubſtance, and therefore cannot be ſatisfied with worldly contentments: as it is with the body, ſo it is with the ſoule in this, the neceſſity of the body, and emptineſſe thereof is not filled with ſpirituall things, but with earthly; ſo a ſpirituall emptineſſe muſt haue a ſpirituall repleniſhment: Can a man fill a houſe with grace? No, a houſe is a body, and therefore muſt have houſhold ſtuffe, and the like, which are bodies to fill it: ſo the ſoule which is incorporeall is not filled with bodies,

with ſilver and gold, or any thing in the world; for all the honours, pleaſures, and the like, in the world, are bodily honours, bodily pleaſures, and bodily delights, and therefore cannot fill a ſpirituall emptineſſe; the foole, that our Saviour ſpeaks of *Luke* 12. ſhewed himſelfe to be a foole indeede, in that hee ſayd to his ſoule, *Soule take thy eaſe, thou haſt much goods layd up for many yeares, verſ.* 19. whereas al thoſe goods did onely concerne his body, for notwithſtanding all them, his ſoule was miſerable, empty, and

and wicked; his body indeed had muchgoods, much ſilver and gold layd up for many years, but his ſoule had never a ragge.

Laſtly, the ſoule it ſelfe is unſatiable, and therefore nothing can ſatisfie it. The ſoules of men ever ſince the Apoſtaſy of the ſoule from God, by *Adams* fall, have wandred up and downe like Devils, men run one after this luſt, another after that, one after this profit, that preferment, yet finde no reſt in any thing. It is the curſe of God upon mans ſoule, becauſe it would not

reſt on God, that therefore it ſhould not reſt on any thing elſe; the ſoule ſhall never have ſatisfaction, unleſſe grace bring it backe againe to the ſame God, from whence it hath fallen, and ſo ſet it upon God and Chriſt: A wicked man may ſay he is contented, and he thankes God he hath enough; but the reaſon is, becauſe he thinks he hath grace too, and that enough to carry him to heaven: for if that wicked men knew that they had no grace, or that they had not enough to free them frō hel, were they never

ſo

ſo rich, honourable, &c. yet they could have but cold comfort. *Why*, ſaith the Prophet *Eſay* 55. 2. *doe you lay out your ſilver, and not for bread, and your labour without being ſatisfied?* Why doe you beſtow all your thoughts and meditations, all your paines and labours to get the world, to get gaine and preferment, to ſatisfie your luſts? Know this is not bread, it is a Scorpion; it is not fiſh, but a Serpent; will you feede your bodies with them for a while, and ſtarve your ſoules for ever? Suppoſe thou hadſt got all that thou

canſt deſire of theſe goods, and thou commeſt to lye upon thy death-bed, afflicted with many paines and aches of thy body, and troubled with the ſtings of an accuſing conſcience in thy ſoule, ſome man would tell thee of thy great honours and preferments, of thy large revenewes, and preſent thy golden coffers, and ſhould ſay; Sir why doe you complaine of paines, and aches, and agonies? thinke of theſe things: alas, they cannot give eaſe to the leaſt of thy torments, they cannot ſhelter thy ſoule from that feare-

full

full doomes ſentence, *Goe ye curſed into everlaſting fire*: it is not gold nor ſilver, nor all the wealth in the world, that can deliver a ſinner from the wrath of God: wouldſt thou have true good? God is onely good; he is good in the higheſt perfection, he is an abſolute good without evill, all other good hath its mixture of ſorrow, griefe, and hatred, with love, delight, and joy. But God is the onely good, *Prov.* 11. 23. *The deſire of the Righteous is onely good*, he deſires God, and Chriſt, and the eternall love of God in Chriſt to

to be manifeſted unto him, and therein hee roules and reſts himſelfe, but the hope of the wicked is indignation, hee onely deſires the baſe pelfe of the world, but the wrath of heaven is with it, and he ſhall bewaile his owne ſoule, that for ſuch baſe things hee ſhould refuſe the eternall good and neglect it.

Secondly, God is eminent in all goodneſſe, all other good hath for the moſt part but one good in it, or three at the moſt, meate will not cloath a man, nor cloth will not feede

feede a man, but in God there is all good, infinitely greater than mans ſoule is or can be capable of. Doſt thou deſire Riches? goe to God, and then thou ſhalt have all that thou canſt deſire. Doſt thou deſire honour, and length of dayes, even eternity? goe to God. When a man goes to one place for food, they muſt goe to another place for cloathes; ſhouldeſt thou goe to the Drapers ſhop for cloathes, then thou muſt goe to another place for meate. Thou takeſt an hundred wayes in vaine that ſeekeſt after the things of this

this world; if thou wouldſt goe to God, thou might'ſt have all thy deſires accompliſhed, and all thy wants ſupplyed at once in him.

Thirdly, God is ſuch a good that without him nothing is good, when thou deſireſt gold, thou deſireſt not the earth, but the good of it; if thou couldſt have the good uſe of it, thou wouldſt not deſire the earthen matter of it: the good of gold and ſilver, of apparell and the like, is from God; whatſoever good it be, if God be not in it, it is not its ſelfe; thou

thon haſt money in thy purſe, if thou haſt not God alſo in thy heart, it is not treaſure, but canker; thou that art cloathed with never ſuch coſtly garments, if withall thou art not cloathed with Chriſts Righteouſneſſe, they are not garments to cover thee, but badges of thy loathſomeneſſe, and nakedneſſe before God; the gold, of thy gold; the honour, of thy honours; the pleaſure and delight of thy delights; the garment, of thy garments; is Gods love in them all. In joy God, and thou haſt good of them all, *Pſal.* 63. 1.

63. 1. *O God thou art my God, my ſoule thirſteth after thee, my fleſh longeth greatly after thee, in a barren and dry land without water*; a barren good, the Juyce & ſap of the heart, and the roote of all good is from God alone.

Laſtly, God is ſuch a good, that if thou haſt him not for thy great good, who is of all infinite goodneſſe to his people, who have choſen and preferred for their onely good; The ſame God will be a God of infinite terrour and wrath to all ſuch as have rejected him, and choſen falſe

falſe Gods to themſelves. Is God become this evill? juſtly mayſt thou tremble, and feare all; all the devills in hell, without the wrath of thy God, whom thou haſt rejected, the flames of hell would not bee terrible, but the Lords wrath as a fire, and a River of Brimſtone doth kindle it. *Our God* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *is a conſuming fire*: the very hell of hell, the fire of fire will God bee to thy ſoule without grace. Wherefore if thou wouldſt deſire any thing to doe thy ſoule good, then de-

ſire grace; grace, or elſe thou periſheſt; grace, or elſe thou dyeſt; get grace, or elſe thou art damned in hell for ever.

FINIS.

THE DESTRVCTION OF Inbred-Corruption: OR, The Christians VVarfare against his bosome Enemy.

BODLEIANA BIBLIOTHECA

Being a sure, certaine, and choice Antidote against fleshly lusts.

By that faithfull and painfull labourer in the Lords Vineyard, Mr. *Alexander Symson* late Minister of Gods Word at *Merton* in *SCOTLAND*.

GAL. 5. 24.

They that are Christs have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts.

2 PET. 2. 11.

Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstaine from fleshly lusts, which warre against the soule.

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b.